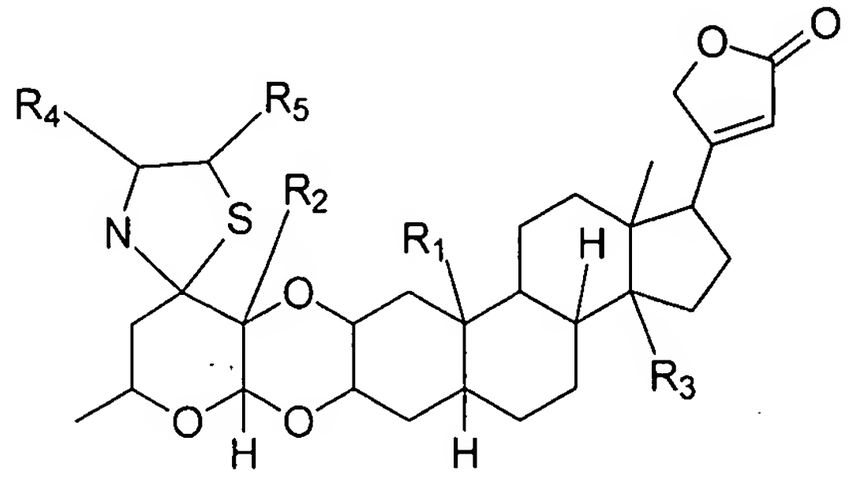
## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

**Please replace the paragraphs beginning at page 27, line 12 to page 29, line 3 with the following:**

In another embodiment the present invention thus relates to a compound of the formula ~~I~~Ia or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,

formula ~~I~~Ia



wherein $R^1$ is selected from the group comprising alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, alkyloxyalkyl, alkylthioalkyl, alkyloxycarbonyl, alkanoyl, cycloalkylalkyl, cycloalkylcarbonyl, cycloalkylalkanoyl, cycloalkylalkoxycarbonyl, cycloalkylthioalkyl, alkylcarbonyloxyalkyl, arylcarbonyloxyalkyl, cycloalkylcarbonyloxyalkyl, silyloxyalkyl, aralkyl, arylalkenyl, arylcarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl, aralkoxycarbonyl, arylthioalkyl, aralkanoyl, aroyl, silyloxyalkyl, carboxyl, alkenylcarbonyl, alkynylcarbonyl, $Het^1$oxyalkyl, $Het^1$alkoxycarbonyl, $Het^1$oxycarbonyl, $Het^1$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^1$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^1$arylthioalkyl, $Het^1$aryloxycarbonyl, $Het^1$aralkoxycarbonyl, $Het^1$oxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^1$alkyloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^1$aryloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^1$carbonyloxyalkyl, $Het^1$alkylcarbonyloxyalkyl, $Het^1$aralkylcarbonyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$oxyalkyl, $Het^2$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$oxycarbonyl, $Het^2$alkoxycarbonyl, $Het^2$aralkoxycarbonyl, $Het^2$aryloxycarbonyl, $Het^2$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^2$arylthioalkyl, $Het^2$oxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$alkyloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$aryloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$carbonyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$alkylcarbonyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$aralkylcarbonyloxyalkyl,$CR^6=NR^7$, $CR^6=N(OR^7)$,

with $R^6$ and $R^7$ being independently selected from the group comprising hydrogen, hydroxyl, alkyl, aryl, $Het^1$, $Het^1$alkyl, $Het^1$aryl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aminoalkyl, aminoaryl, alkylcarbonylamino, arylcarbonylamino, alkylthiocarbonylamino and arylthiocarbonylamino;

wherein $R^2$ and $R^3$ have the same definition as indicated above;

wherein $R^1$ $R^2$ and $R^3$ are optionally substituted by one or more substituents independently selected from the group as indicated above, and

wherein $R^4$ and $R^5$ are hydrogen or alkyl.

In a preferred embodiment the uscharin derivative according to the invention is a compound having the formula ~~I~~Ia, wherein $R^1$ is selected from the group comprising alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, alkyloxyalkyl, alkylthioalkyl, alkanoyl, cycloalkylalkyl, cycloalkylcarbonyl, cycloalkylalkanoyl, cycloalkylthioalkyl, silyloxyalkyl, aralkyl, arylalkenyl, arylcarbonyl, arylthioalkyl, aralkanoyl, aroyl, silyloxyalkyl, carboxyl, alkenylcarbonyl, alkynylcarbonyl, $Het^1$oxyalkyl, $Het^1$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^1$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^1$arylthioalkyl, $Het^1$oxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^1$alkyloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^1$aryloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$oxyalkyl, $Het^2$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^2$arylthioalkyl, $Het^2$oxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$alkyloxyalkylcarbonyl, $Het^2$aryloxyalkylcarbonyl, $CR^6=NR^7$, $CR^6=N(OR^7)$, with $R^6$ and $R^7$ being independently selected from the group comprising hydrogen, hydroxyl, alkyl, aryl, $Het^1$, $Het^1$alkyl, $Het^1$aryl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aminoalkyl, aminoaryl, alkylcarbonylamino, arylcarbonylamino, alkylthiocarbonylamino and arylthiocarbonylamino;wherein $R^2$ and $R^3$ have the same definition as above indicated; wherein $R^1$ $R^2$ and $R^3$ are optionally substituted by one or more substituents independently selected from the group as indicated above, and wherein $R^4$ and $R^5$ are hydrogen or alkyl.

In a even more preferred embodiment, the invention relates to an uscharin derivative having the formula ~~I~~Ia, wherein $R^1$ is selected from the group comprising alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, alkyloxyalkyl, alkylthioalkyl, cycloalkylalkyl, cycloalkylthioalkyl, silyloxyalkyl, aralkyl, arylalkenyl, arylthioalkyl, silyloxyalkyl, carboxyl, $Het^1$oxyalkyl, $Het^1$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^1$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^1$arylthioalkyl, $Het^2$oxyalkyl, $Het^2$alkyloxyalkyl, $Het^2$aryloxyalkyl, $Het^2$arylthioalkyl, optionally substituted by one or more substituents independently selected from the group indicated in above; wherein $R^2$ and $R^3$ are hydroxyl and wherein $R^4$ and $R^5$ are hydrogen or alkyl.